

SIK *Students for International Knowledge*

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The Global Knowledge Report

Diversity in all aspects of life will and always has been the humbling reminder of a multifaceted and highly complex world, which is hardly contained within a single ideology, person, or people. SIK has attempted to spread this knowledge of diversity in order to break barriers where students and teachers alike can spread personal perspectives and specialized knowledge with each other. Universities are some of the most democratic institutions in the world and serve as the pinnacle of knowledge where the common denominator of curiosity brings the student body together. SIK hopes to promote and sponsor events conducive to this communication. The newsletter is another avenue for this mission and invites all students to participate, reinforce, disagree, critique the articles published in this document. From North Korea, Egypt, sub-Saharan Africa, to the Israel/Palestinian conflict, SIK has worked with a number of student members and professors to start the discussion and take leading roles actively and intellectually on these global issues effecting all us today.



Students for International Knowledge went to Jersey's after a long leadership retreat where many participated in activities that brought the group closer together.

Message from the Editor

Welcome to this quarter's issue of the Global Knowledge Report. SIK is excited and enthusiastic about this issue's revised look and feel to the newsletter. SIK is working hard to increase curiosity, participation and membership to the organization through having more discussions, activities, and submissions of articles. As Winter Quarter comes to a close, SIK looks forward to its Spring Quarter banquet in addition to new leadership going into Fall 2007. Shawn Mohamed will be replacing André Castillo as SIK's President. Shawn has been a valuable officer since SIK began and offers valuable experience. The future looks bright for SIK and its ever increasing potential to bring knowledge and intellectually stimulating discussion to the student body.

-Joel Herrera

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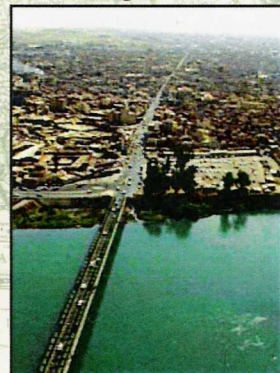
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Towards Cooperation or Chaos?



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A ccording to a December report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), "Hollowed out and fatally weakened, the Iraqi state today is prey to armed militias, sectarian forces and a political class that, by putting short term personal benefit ahead of long term national interests, is complicit in Iraq's tragic destruction." As a result, the past three months have seen a number of proposals for addressing the Iraq crisis. The Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group in December offered 79 recommendations for success in Iraq. This was followed by President Bush's "Surge" plan in January, and presidential hopefuls Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton are themselves presenting their own alternatives—a full and immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces in 2009

(if not sooner). While it's possible that the "Surge" of 20,000 additional U.S. soldiers may help the U.S. to stabilize Iraq in the short-term (more so than a premature withdrawal anyway), it will require the implementation of two key

“. . .the removal of Baathists from their jobs after the 2003 invasion and the disbanding of the Iraqi army have only served to weaken the government and ignite the insurgency.”

recommendations of the Iraq Study Group and the ICG to be implemented for it to succeed—national reconciliation and cooperation from Iran and Syria. Since Iraq's government announced its latest security plan in January, insurgents' tactics have been improving. Insurgents have since been able to shoot down two

U.S. attack helicopters while car bombings continue at will across the country. The first step to end the insurgency must be complete amnesty for all fighting the government, as called for by the Iraq Study Group. Amnesty has been crucial to prior successes in counter-insurgency campaigns and was effectively used by the British in Malaysia in the 1950s. The second involves reintegrating former Baathist government officials and reversing "De-Baathification." Ironically, this tactic was very effective in post-World War II Nazi Germany and after the fall of the Soviet Union, where ex-Nazis and ex-Communists were allowed to resume participation in their governments so long as they were not themselves directly responsible for war crimes. The only unusual aspect of this recommendation was that it was never instituted to begin with, and is now unfortunately banned by Iraq's constitution (barring an amendment). As has become increasingly clear, the removal of Baathists from their jobs after the 2003 invasion and the disbanding of the Iraqi army have only served to weaken the government and ignite the insurgency.

It's also important to keep in mind the influential roles played by Syria and Iran in the Middle East and Iraq in particular and the potential they have for stabilizing, or de-stabilizing, Iraq. Iran has influence in all sectors of Iraq so as to be prepared for any eventuality. Syria itself has a policy of "malign neglect" over its border with the dangerous Anbar Province.



Dareeh is the holy Shiite Muslim shrine in Najaf, Iraq and has been the target of numerous attacks by conflicting Shiite and Sunni tribes (<http://www.news.navy.mil>).

ince, home to most of Iraq's deadly Sunni insurgents, and does little to prevent their crossing and rearming. Both are leveraging their influence to protect themselves in the event of an eventual U.S. withdrawal in addition to pressuring the United States to address other issues they hold important. These are: ending sanctions imposed on them by the U.S. and other Western powers, regaining access to the Golan Heights (Syria) and Jerusalem (Iran) currently held by Israel by ending the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and securing their legitimacy as regional powers. The United States is not keen to do any of those, but this is the price Iran and Syria are demanding for their cooperation. Though help in Iraq is alone a strong motivator to address these issues, it certainly isn't the only one, and the administration would be well served to made headway in the Arab-Israeli Conflict and bring together Iraq's neighbors on whatever common ground it can.

As the Iraqi Government becomes just one of many groups competing for the spoils of Iraq, so too must the United States change its position of simply supporting Iraq's government against its enemies. Amnesty and an end to De-Baathification and must be pushed for by the U.S. and agreed to by all parties to even begin much-needed national reconciliation. Furthermore, it's clear that

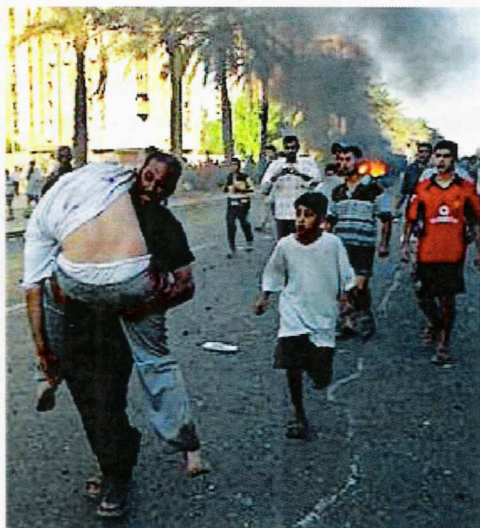


IRAQ FACTS

Full Name:	The Republic of Iraq
Capital:	Baghdad
Government:	Parliamentary Democracy
Prime Minister:	Nouri al-Maliki (Shiite)
President:	Jalal Talabani (Kurdish)
Population:	26.5 million (UN, 2005)
Major Religion:	Islam (Shiite 60–65%, Sunni 32–37%)
Major Languages:	Arabic, Kurdish
Ethnic Groups:	Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%
Literary:	40%
Oil Reserves:	115,000,000,000 Barrels



Nouri al-Maliki, Prime Minister of Iraq.
Photo borrowed from
<http://washingtonpost.com>



Johns Hopkins University's sponsored *Lancet Report* estimates that 654,965 Iraqis have died in excess because of the 2003 invasion. Photo borrowed from <http://www.smh.com.au>

"it will take more than talking to Iraq's neighbours to obtain their cooperation," as stated by the International Crisis Group, and difficult concessions must be made with regards to the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the international blockade against Iran and Syria to elicit their cooperation. With mounting opposition at home and Iraq being pushed to the edge of chaos with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran all threatening to intervene in

the event of a U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, the United States can no longer afford to set preconditions and simply wait for other players to change their positions on U.S. policies. With conciliatory speeches by Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad becoming more and more frequent, signs are pointing towards an opportunity for engagement, and hopefully, a breakthrough in the quagmire.